Dream Journey at College Track

Promoting Social Emotional Learning
Why dream journey?
Finding a Focus

ACADEMIC MINDSETS

SOCIAL SKILLS

ACADEMIC PERSEVERANCE

LEARNING STRATEGIES

ACADEMIC BEHAVIORS

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
Academic Mindsets

- I belong in this academic community
- I can succeed at this
- My ability and competence grow with my effort
- This work has value for me
Using Dreams to Cultivate Mindset

We drew on theory and research:

- Dan Pink -- mastery, autonomy, purpose
- Bill Damon -- sense of purpose adds both energy and resilience to our lives
- Carol Dweck -- being anxious or defensive vs. inspired to try new things
- Social-learning theory -- internal locus of control
Dreams In Practice at College Track

Progression:

☑ Entering Dream Experiences
☑ Workshop Offerings
☑ Summer Experiences
☑ Passion Projects [Example]
☑ Dream Colleges
☑ Dreams for the World Within College Essays
Entering Students’ Summer Dreams Experience

Activities:

- Ice Breakers/Games
- Who Am I/What Do I Believe Activities
- Dream Declaration [Example]
A Few Student Dreams for Inspiration

I dream that I will...

- End bullying and homelessness
- Get along with my little brother
- Work with adolescent girls and help them to feel good about themselves
- Write a book or make a movie about my life
- Help inner city students with their problems
- Travel around the world
- Be a famous dancer
Dream Experiential
THE END.

We have the best job ever!

Questions?
SEL and 9th Grade Summer Programming

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Hello!

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Hi Ya’ll!

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1. The Context of High School Prep

How “HSP” Came to Be
Intro to the BSV Summer Program

○ Since 2009, BSV has provided summer programming to rising 7th & 8th graders.

○ Students take academic and elective courses across a six-week program.
The 9th Grader Dilemma

“Summer Melt”
Many Breakthrough students were leaving the program in the summer before 9th grade, as well as across the first few months of their high school experience.

Student Testimony
The 9th graders who remained in the program consistently requested help with time management and test preparation, which were more critical in HS.

The “Curse” of Youth
Breakthrough’s 9th grade students are too young to apply for volunteer and professional opportunities, leaving them with a lack of meaningful summer opportunities.
WHAT’S THE SOLUTION?
9TH GRADE SUMMER

Six weeks of programming designed for high school-bound students (est. 2012)
Our largest focus areas for this summer will be to have [the students] take several quizzes and exams, have them write as much as possible, and learn time management skills through an overload on tests, projects, and other assignments. In order for them to find success in this upcoming year, we must give them the tools to study for tests, complete large projects, all while having their normal homework assignments. We would also like to emphasize the use of technology, as this is also very common during the high school years.
The **What**, the **How**, & the **What Else**

**What?**
- How to Take Tests
- How to Write a Lot
- How to Manage Their Time

**How?**
- Give Students a “Normal Workload”
- Overload Them w/ Tests
- Overload Them w/ Projects

**What Else??**
- What could BSV do to “meet students halfway” with this increased workload?
WHAT’S THE SOLUTION?
A new elective course designed to provide students with essential “high school” skills
2. The Development of High School Prep
How “HSP” Has Changed Over Time
A Tale of Two HSP Classes

The HSP course is best understood as having two separate eras.

The first era spans the years from 2012-2015, the second era began in Summer 2016.
Enrollment & Instructors

The Early Years (2012-2015)

High School Prep originally existed as a supplemental, elective course that all students took in addition to their four core academic subjects, and which all teaching fellows taught in addition to their core subject.

Note: Core subjects are Reading, Writing, Biology and Math.

The New Era (2016-Present)

High School Prep became one of the four core classes in the summer program, which all students had to take in addition to an elective of their choosing, and which only four teaching fellows were responsible for teaching.

Note: Reading and Writing Were Combined to Make Room for HSP.
Course Description & Goals

The Early Years (2012-2015)

The High School Prep curriculum will provide students new experiences unique to any other part of Breakthrough. Students will learn critical strategies and skills that will directly prepare them for success in the next four years. The transition from middle school to high school is a pivotal moment in students’ lives and we want to make sure they are ready and have the tools to succeed.

The New Era (2016-Present)

In this course, students will build competencies that will prove useful across multiple classroom environments, and develop non-cognitive skills to help them achieve balance between academic and non academic responsibilities. Students will take greater ownership over their development and consider how they can leverage the 9th grade year to propel themselves towards their postsecondary goals.
Daily Lesson Objectives

The Early Years (2012-2015)
Lessons were designed to build students’ academic skills, including...
- Email Writing
- Goal Selection
- Self-Advocacy
- Time Management
- Active Listening
- Study Skills
- Note-Taking
- Test Preparation
- Learning Types
- Managing Conflict

The New Era (2016-Present)
Lessons are designed so students can define and practice non-cognitive skills, including...
- Time & Stress Management
- Grit and Growth Mindset
- Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy
- Seeking Out and Asking For Help
- Professionalism
- Goal-Setting
3.
The Re-Design Of High School Prep

How We Went From Skills to SEL
Would like to do Poll Everywhere Here

Question: What is the most important component of SEL to provide for students?
Where to **Start**?

- Designing SEL experiences is difficult because there is so much on which you **can** focus.

- The tough part is deciding which aspects of SEL will be most impactful in your **context**.
What the **Data** Told Us

- Asking for Help Matters
- Networking Matters
- “Finding Your Niche” Matters
- Stress Management Matters
- Relationship Building Matters
1. Each finding from the alumni survey was re-written as at least one Enduring Understanding (each of which was paired with an Essential Question)

**Enduring Understandings (EUs)** = the big ideas and concepts that students will come to know across the entire span of a course

**Essential Questions (EQs)** = the big questions students will grapple with that lead them to enduring understandings

**Enduring Understanding**: Self-awareness is a precursor for meaningful interpersonal relationships.

**Essential Question**: How do I build and practice self-awareness?
From Understandings to Objectives

2. EUs and EQs were shown to the HSP teaching fellows, who selected the ones they felt were most meaningful and combined them into weekly objectives.

Example:

**EU:** Self-awareness is a precursor for meaningful interpersonal relationships.

**EQ:** What does “professionalism” mean? How do I practice it effectively?

**Weekly Objective:** SWBAT learn and articulate their areas of strength and growth by completing a personality test and progressing through the process of securing and competing in a job interview (in which they must present themselves professionally)
From Weekly to Daily Objectives

3. The weekly objectives were broken down further into daily objectives

**Example:**

**Weekly Objective:** SWBAT learn and articulate their areas of strength and growth by completing a personality test and progressing through the process of securing and competing in a job interview (in which they must present themselves professionally).

**Daily Objective:** SWBAT identify activities that align with their interests and personal strengths by analyzing the results of their personality test and applying to one of several “internships.”
○ In the past, HSP had been taught as a series of daily, isolated objectives that focused on specific SKILLS (such as using a planner or test-preparation techniques).

○ This year, we had an **overarching goal** for the course that united our lessons into a coherent whole.

○ This **overarching goal** was to address the most common challenges from the alumni survey data, incorporate SEL research and practices, and in doing so provide our current high schoolers with support in areas we may have neglected in the past.
4. HSP in Action!

What SEL Looked Like in BSV Classrooms
The First Key: Variety

- One of our aims in creating HSP lessons was that no two days should feel exactly the same.
- Lessons followed a consistent structure, but we infused tremendous variety into the activities themselves.

Worksheets and Journal Entries

Skits and Poster Presentations

Cross the Line and Gallery Walks
Mock Interview Day

Re-creating real world experience in the classroom space
The Second Key:

Reflection

○ In reading our alumni survey, we knew we needed to provide increased opportunities for students to cultivate self-awareness

○ Every night, student homework included a self-reflective journal entry connected to that day’s lesson

○ Students were encouraged to write about...

The Relevance of That Topic to Their Own Lives
The Extent to Which They Practice Their Learnings
How They Would Like to Grow in That Area
The Third Key: **Discussion**

- The alumni survey revealed that former Breakthrough students wished they had more experience in college-style *discussion* courses.

- We tried to infuse as much *discussion* as possible into High School Prep lessons, while maintaining variety within the conversation structures.

- The goal was to get all of our students talking (introverts unite!)

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Think-Pair-Shares  
Two-Circle Seminars  
Partner Teaching
Socratic Seminar
Topics Discussed:
Minorities & Women in STEM
Educational Inequity in SF Bay Area
Sexual Assault and Consent
Black Lives Matter
5. Key Takeaways

What We Learned and What the Future of HSP Looks Like
What We Learned

- SEL Should Not Be Supplemental
- Course Design Must Start With Empathy
- Reflection Is Key to Making SEL Stick
- The Most Successful Days Mirrored Real Life
- HSP Is Evolving and Will Continue to Change
The **Future** of HSP

- Next summer, the 9th grade summer program is going to be condensed into a two-week long “**High School Prep Camp**”

- This program will not include the academic courses offered in previous summers, and so the focus will be entirely on SEL (6 hrs/day for 2 weeks)

- Our goal is for students to leave camp feeling **prepared and excited** to enter the next phase of their Breakthrough experience
THANKS!
Any questions?

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